

IN THE WORKS

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June 2004

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SANTOS APPOINTED AS STATE'S NEW CHIEF LABOR NEGOTIATOR

On June 21, Governor Gary Locke named Eva Santos the state's chief labor negotiator and director of the Washington State Labor Relations Office, replacing Gary Moore who has resigned to take a position with a Seattle public relations firm, Pacific Public Affairs.

Santos has been serving as deputy director of the Labor Relations Office and has played a leading role in negotiations now underway with state labor unions.

Locke said that Santos already has demonstrated her leadership ability in contract talks scheduled for completion in October.

"I have full faith and confidence in Eva's ability to negotiate new labor contracts that are fair to both state employees and the taxpayers of Washington State," the governor said.

Santos has both private and public sector experience related to labor negotiations. Before joining the state Labor Relations Office last year, she was a key administrator in the state Department of Labor & Industries for 17 years. Prior to entering state service, she was human resources manager for Tacoma Boat.

As director of the Labor Relations Office, Santos will lead the state's labor negotiations team in collective bargaining over seven master agreements with unions that represent state employees in general government. Her team also represents The Evergreen State College and most of the state's community colleges in negotiations with unions representing employees on those campuses.

"I look forward to establishing collective bargaining agreements that make Washington State a better government, and a better place to work," Santos said. ★

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COMPETITIVE CONTRACTING MANUAL AIDS PROCESS

State agencies and their employees have raised questions about competitive contracting. Many of these questions soon will be addressed in a nine-chapter manual to be published in the fall of 2004.

Since the competitive contracting rules process began, the Department of General Administration also has been developing a manual to describe the competitive contracting process and serve as a guide throughout the competitive contracting process.

“The manual is the result of a lot of hard work on the part of many people interested in the competitive contracting process,” said David Gomez, a management analyst at General Administration.

Gomez has been involved with the rules and manual development for almost a year. “We understand that state agencies provide a huge number of services,” said Gomez. “The manual is intended to be a guide and a companion to the process.”

The manual will be useful to a broad audience because it helps people understand fundamental details of business analysis and the contracting process.

The examples and illustrations in the manual focus on presenting a clear picture of competitive contracting when the option takes effect in July 2005.

Hundreds of people inside and outside of state government are now reviewing the draft manual currently available online at:
<http://www.ga.wa.gov/competitivecontracting/documents/CC-manual.doc>

The combination of the competitive contracting rules and manual aim to provide a fair and consistent set of rules and processes that can be easily understood.

For more information on competitive contracting, check out some of the frequently asked questions at www.ga.wa.gov/competitivecontracting/faq.htm ★

KEY THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT COMPETITIVE CONTRACTING

- Individual agencies will be responsible for deciding whether a service is selected for competitive contracting. The agency also is responsible for managing the contracting process.
- Before deciding to put a service up for bid, an agency must determine whether a competitive market exists for the service.
- An agency must notify potentially displaced employees 90 days in advance of soliciting bids.
- Employees will be able to offer alternatives to contracting within 60 days.
- If a service is subject to bidding, the potentially displaced employees can create one or more Employee Business Units (EBUs) to create their own bid.
- An EBU is a unit within a parent agency and its members are state employees. Membership in an EBU is limited to positions directly affected by the contract award.
- Whoever is selected to do the work, whether a private contractor or an EBU, will be subject to performance standards included in the contract.
- A successful private bidder is required to consider hiring state employees who may be displaced.

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CIVIL SERVICE RULES ADOPTED THIS JULY, EFFECTIVE NEXT JULY

Virtually the entire civil service code for the state of Washington has been rewritten to support the goals of a modern human resource system.

The new rules will be proposed for adoption July 29, following a year-long process that has included extensive stakeholder involvement and feedback from employees.

By the end of June, employees will have one more chance to review the full package of new rules online at <http://hr.dop.wa.gov/hrreform/rules.htm>.

There will be a formal comment period for 20 days prior to July 29 when DOP director Gene Matt will hear formal testimony on the proposed rules. Interested parties may submit written comments during that time.

Though the majority of the new civil service rules will be adopted July 29, 2004, they will not become effective until July 1, 2005.

Sharon Whitehead, deputy director of DOP, anticipates the need to do some fine-tuning between now and then based on “any issues that might arise as employers start integrating the new rules into their systems.”

Any fine-tuning that is needed likely will take place early next year.

Rules relating to leave, Washington Management Service and the Combined Fund Drive will be developed later this year for review and adoption next spring.



THE HRMS SELF-SERVICE PACKAGE PROVIDES ONLINE ACCESS TO PERSONNEL DATA AND SERVICES

Brian Turner, project manager for implementation of the state's new personnel/payroll system, loves to talk about the efficiencies and flexibility of the new system.

However, he readily admits “the benefits of the Human Resource Management System (HRMS) won't be realized by most state employees until they hook up with its self-service capabilities.”

At present, the majority of state employees interact indirectly with their personnel/payroll system through the payroll, personnel, or business office.

These indirect transactions usually take place only two or three times a month – twice when they are paid and again when they turn in a leave slip, apply for training, or complete a travel authorization form.

That could all change with self-service, which would give employees more direct access to their personnel data and services.

Turner notes that HRMS self-service capabilities will roll out gradually over the project's three releases. Since the focus for Release 1 is to ensure that key functions like payroll operate appropriately, the self-service capabilities available in Release 1 will be offered as a pilot to a limited number of agencies.

The pilot will provide key information concerning the ease of implementation, demand for the service and the effect it has on agency workflow.

The pilot version will likely include the ability to view leave balances and paycheck data and to update home address and work phone.

In August 2005, Release 2, self-service capabilities will be offered statewide and may be expanded to include such things as registration for training, job search and application capabilities.

In October 2005, Release 3, self-service will include time management functionality. Time management provides some of the most anticipated self-service features like on-line application and approval for leave time.

JOB CLASSIFICATION PLAN PROGRESSING

Employees want to know when their positions will move to the new classification system. They'll have some answers by early July, according to Dorothy Gerard, assistant director with the Department of Personnel (DOP). "Thanks to input from many agencies, and to the work of an interagency task force, we'll have a prioritized list of job classes ready to move to the new system in phases over the next two biennia," Gerard said.

The initial wave of job class consolidations will be broken out into two groups. The first group - approximately 190 current classes affecting approximately 17,000 employees - will have job specifications approved by the DOP director beginning in September to be implemented June 1, 2005. All the job specifications for this group have been posted on DOP's website in the past few months for comment from both the human resources community and employees.

The second and third groups include approximately 600 current job classes and will affect over 16,000 employees. These job classes are scheduled to be adopted beginning mid 2005, and made effective in early 2006. (To receive notification when the draft specifications for these classes are available for review, sign up for the HR2005 listserv at <http://listserv.wa.gov/archives/hr2005.html>.)

As a result of these planned job class consolidations, there will be roughly one-third fewer job classes than when the Personnel System Reform Act passed in 2002. About half of all state employees will see changes to their class structure.

The remainder of job classes are planned to be phased in over the next two biennia. Agencies and institutions continue to help DOP determine the best way to group the remaining classes.

Employees will transition to the consolidated job classes at their current salary and will continue to receive step increases until they reach the top of the salary range. No employees will experience a loss in salary as a result of the job classification changes.

Find out more on the DOP Web site at <http://hr.dop.wa.gov/hrreform/update-classplan.htm>.



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